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NEWS

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CENTRAL DISTRICT HEALTH RECEIVES FDA GRANT FOR FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM

BOISE, Idaho, October 18, 2002 -- The Central District Health Department (CDHD) has received a \$28,830 grant from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to fund a pilot program designed to enhance food safety in local area restaurants.

Tom Turco, CDHD environmental health director, said the program will help restaurants monitor and control their food cooling and cool holding procedures. Cooling hot food down to the appropriate temperature within a quick period of time is key to preventing food spoilage and foodborne bacteria growth, Turco said.

“The grant will enable the CDHD to purchase a number of food temperature logging devices, which we will loan to local restaurant operators so they can monitor and record the temperature of various foods during the cooling process,” said Turco. “That data will be downloaded into a computer and a report will be generated to help the restaurant operator know whether changes are needed in their cooling and storing procedures,” he said.

Turco said the CDHD will work in partnership with restaurants to develop a plan to address any problems discovered through the testing. “We hope to enlist at least 30 restaurants to participate in this program,” he said. “The whole effort is designed to help restaurants maintain or improve the quality of their food handling practices to better serve their customers. Part of the plan is to provide long-term consultation and support to restaurant managers to ensure their success in this program,” he said.

The CDHD program is one of 10 food safety programs throughout the country to receive an FDA grant. The grants are for a one-year period and are designed to promote the development of improved state and local food safety programs. For more information call the CDHD Environmental Health program at 327-8520.

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